

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the thorough examination of the application that is reflected in the Office Action dated May 7, 2004. Applicants amend claims 1, 4, 14, and 17, cancel claims 2, 5, 15 and 18 without prejudice. Applicants submit that these changes add no new matter to the application and are fully supported by the original disclosure.

Claims 7-13 and 20-25 have been withdrawn from prosecution/

Claims 1, 3-4, 6, 14, 16, 17 and 19 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

Objections to Specification

The specification was objected to for informalities. Applicants submit that the above outlined claim amendments render these objections moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

Independent claims 1, 4, 14, and 17

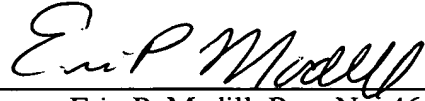
Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 5, 15 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicants rewrite independent claims 1, 4, 14, and 17 to include the limitations of claims 2, 5, 15 and 18, respectively, and cancel claims 2, 5, 15 and 18 without prejudice. Amendment of these claims should not be construed as an admission that these claims are unpatentable over the cited references; rather these amendments are intended only to expedite prosecution of this application so that a patent will issue. Applicants will file a continuation application to continue prosecution of the originally filed independent claims.

REQUEST FOR ALLOWANCE

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all pending claims in the application are patentable. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited. Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 5, 2004

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